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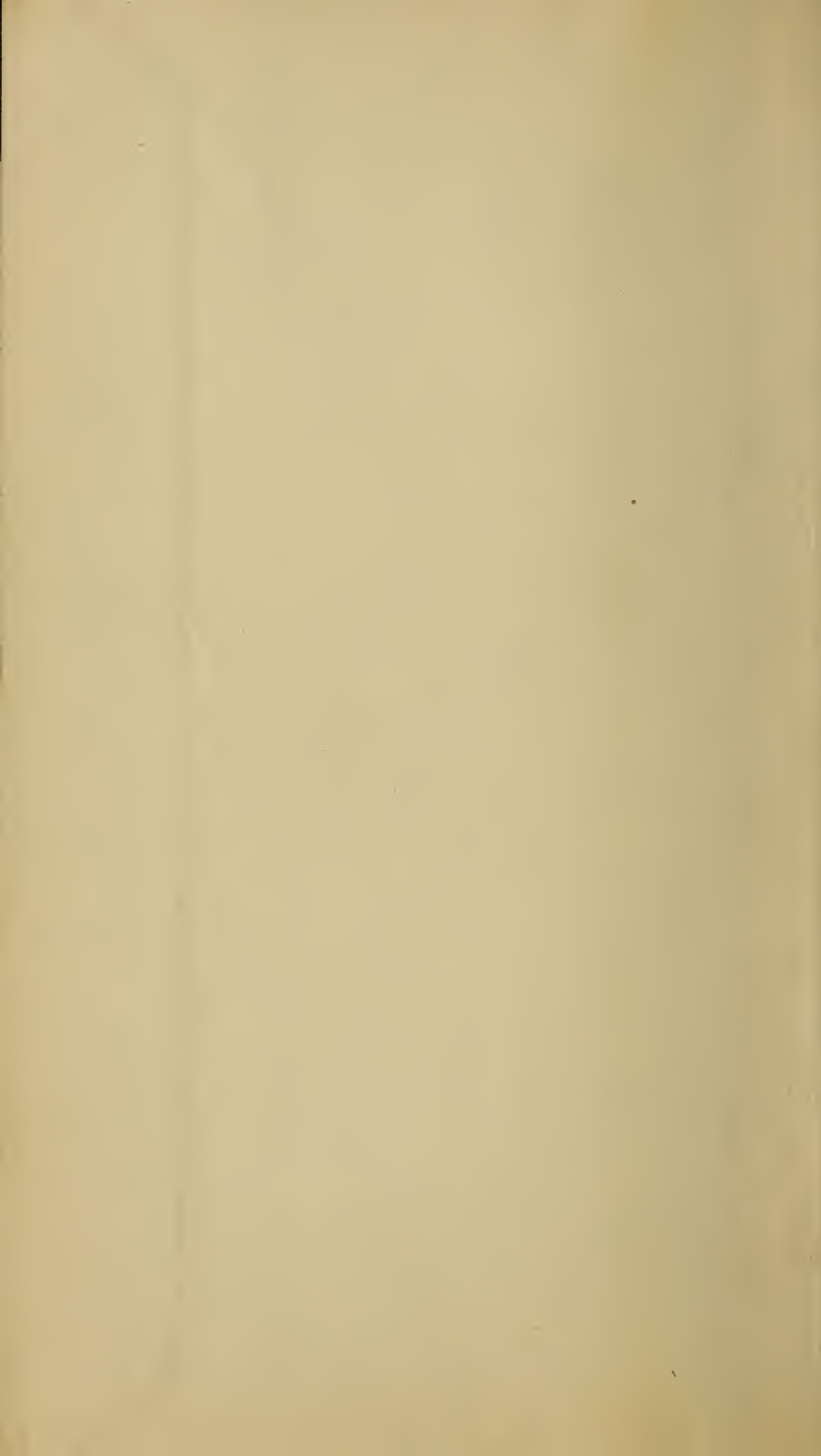
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HANEY'S USEFUL HANDBOOKS.

SELF CURE
OF
STAMMERING

AND
STUTTERING;

GIVING

THE MOST APPROVED AND SUCCESS-
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FROM AUTHORITIES IN THE
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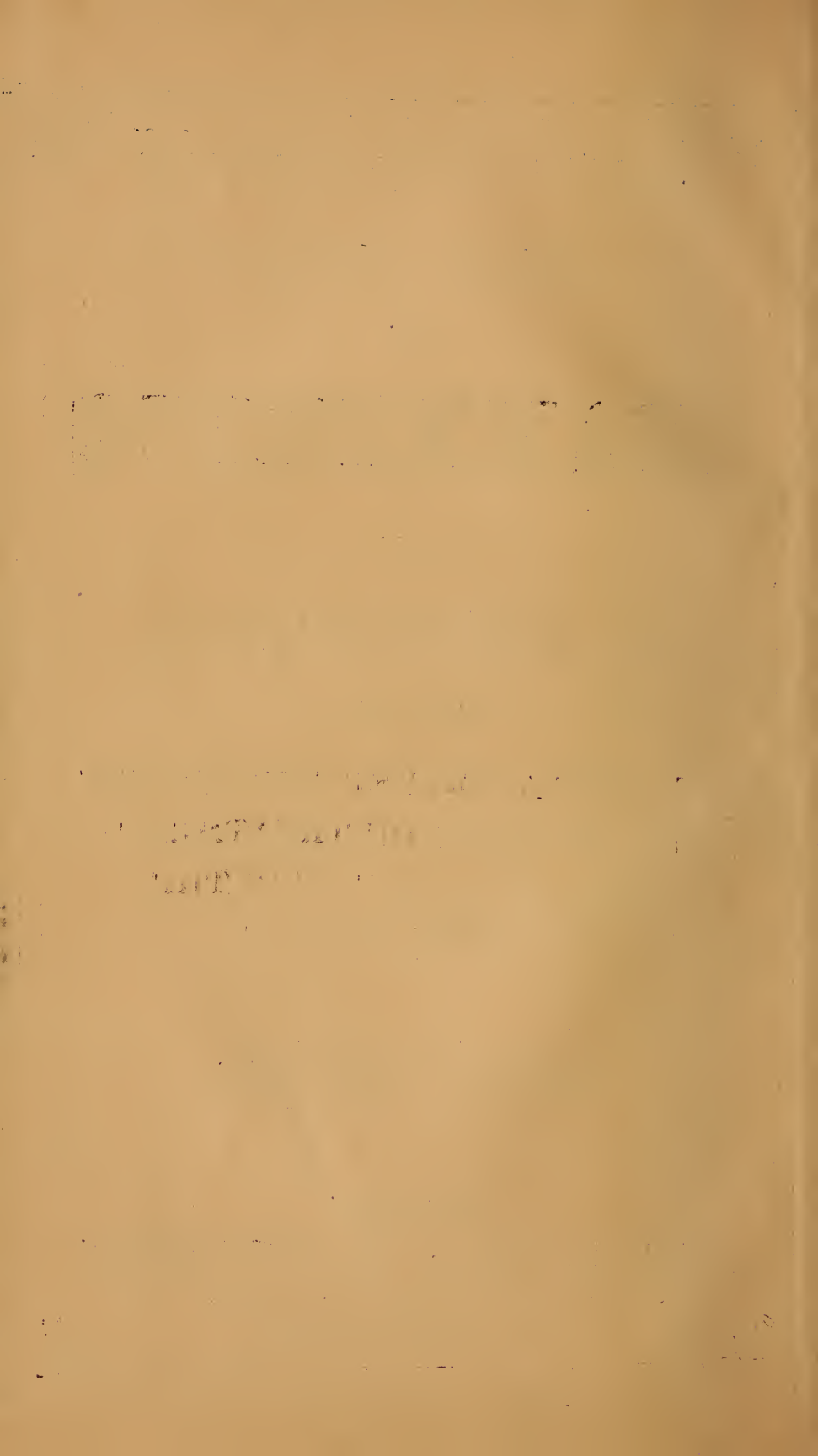
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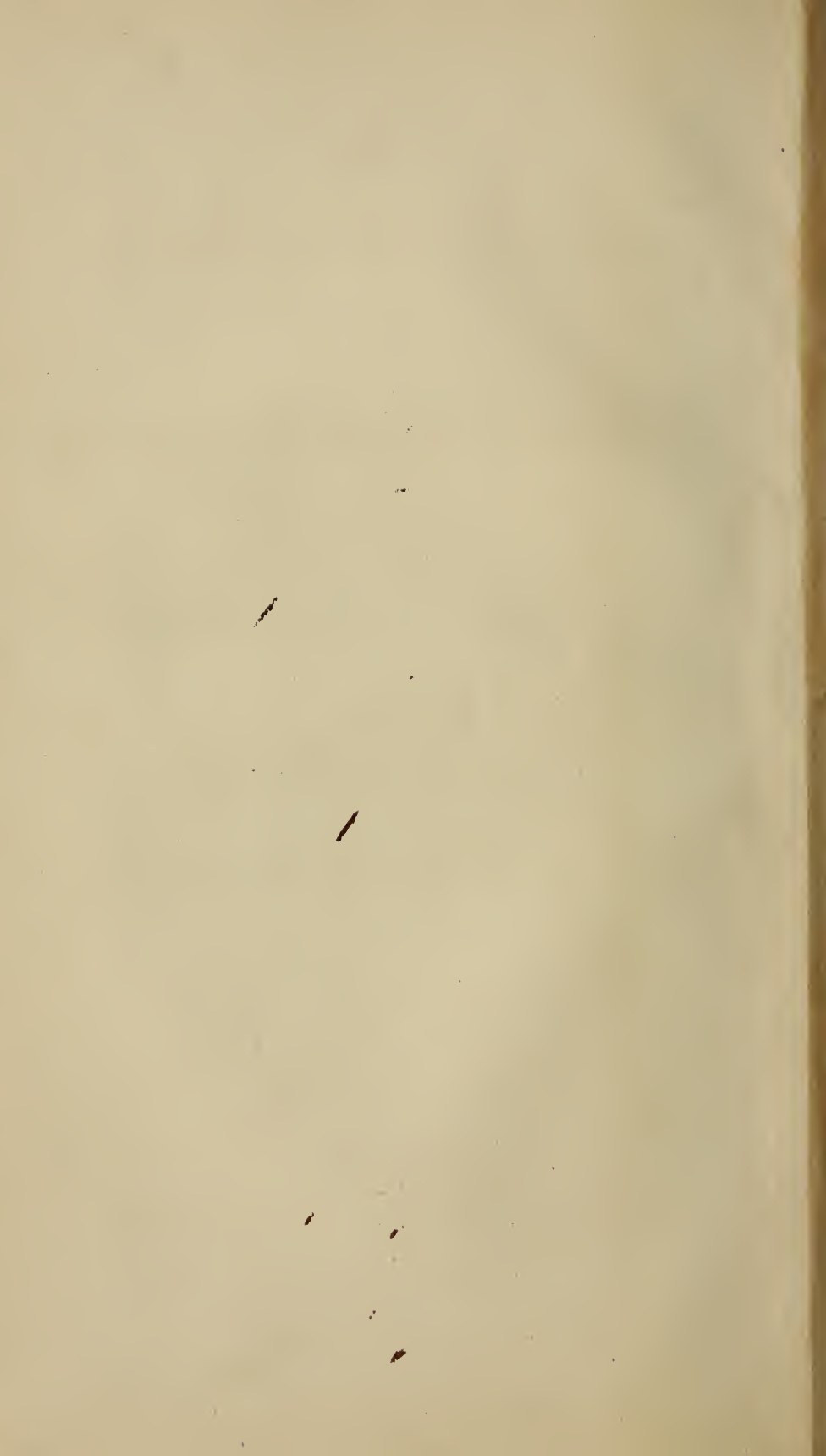
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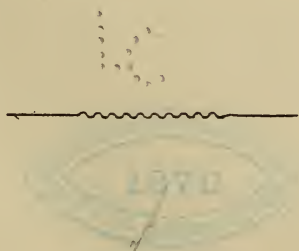




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THE
CAUSES, PREVENTION AND TREATMENT
OF
Stammering and Stuttering,
WITH THE
MOST APPROVED AND SUCCESSFUL METHODS
OF
SELF CURE.

CAREFULLY COMPILED FROM THE BEST AUTHORITIES.



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Slammering.

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P R E F A C E.

THE object of this little book is to present such information as will aid the victim of stammering or stuttering in overcoming his disagreeable impediment. In pursuance of our plan we have collected together what seem to be the most sensible theories regarding the nature and causes of these vocal blemishes, and also the methods for overcoming them which appear most sound in theory and successful in practice. 22

There have been many works published on these subjects, many treatises written, and often very conflicting are the views of these writers. Countless remedies are advised by a countless number of advisers, nearly all of whom appear to believe they have discovered some infallible mode of treatment. Many of these plans involve surgical operations which are often dangerous, and their efficacy seems almost wholly imaginary. These will be referred to in a subsequent part of this book. Malformations of the organs of speech are so extremely rare, and appear to really have so little to do with stammering or stuttering that it is safe to set down all methods of cure by operations upon these organs as fallacious and dangerous, so far as they concern *these* defects of speech. The simpler modes of treatment appear most successful in practice, and we have endeavored to present the best of these. We make no claim to originality in this volume—there is but little that is absolutely new herein. We prefer to give those systems which have been tested, rather than any new but unproved theories or systems whose only plea would be originality. Such things often appear very plausible, but plausibility should go for naught if not backed by practical success.

It is not pretended that there is any "cure" in this book which will prove effective in *every* case. The plans of treatment presented in the following pages have all proved successful in some cases. This gives fair ground for the belief that their virtue will extend to new cases. Something must be left to the discretion of the patient him-

self in the selection of the special treatments of his own case, and he should not allow himself to become discouraged even should the plan selected prove unsuccessful in his individual case. Among the various methods presented herewith, we believe nearly all persons will find their requirements met, and we firmly believe that the reader's trouble may be overcome by one or another of these.

Regarding the subject of self cure some authors oppose its possibility, but it is noteworthy that these writers, so far as our knowledge goes, are all devoted to the treatment of stammering as a profession, consequently are perhaps naturally inclined to advocate the necessity of the patient placing himself under professional treatment and guidance. We believe we have sufficient authority for saying that this is unnecessary in the majority of cases, and that self cure may be reasonably hoped for as a general rule, if the patient will exercise his *will*, and without the exercise of the will we doubt his cure by any professional or by any method.

Prevention is said to be better than cure, and doubtless stammering and stuttering, as well as other slighter peculiarities and defects of speech could be almost wholly avoided if the habit were never formed. In this belief we earnestly direct the attention of parents and teachers to the remarks in subsequent pages relating to the early acquisition of these habits by children, and to other kindred items.

Experience seems to prove that it is merely waste of money to invest in any pretended mechanical appliance, or in any professed "secret." Many pretenders profess to have infallible cures, but in none of these cases do their pretensions appear to be well founded, and many are those whose fond hopes have been disappointed even after the expenditure of considerable sums. Whatever may be the merits or defects of this volume we believe it will be found to embody the best practical instructions for self treatment attainable anywhere. Dilligent search has fully convinced us of this fact.

SELF CURE OF STAMMERING AND STUTTERING.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STAMMERING AND STUTTERING.

THE terms "stammering" and "stuttering" are in this country synonymously used to designate all kinds of defective utterance. In but few works written upon this subject has the discrimination between these disorders been laid down with correctness.

Stammering is characterized by an inability to, or difficulty in, properly enunciating some or many of the elementary speech sounds, either when they occur at the beginning or the middle of a word, accompanied or not, as the case may be, by a slow, hesitating, more or less indistinct delivery, but unattended with frequent repetitions of the initial sounds, and consequent convulsive efforts to surmount the difficulty.

The following is the description of the stammer of a little girl of ten years old, in the parent's own words: "The child does not appear to be timid or nervous except before strangers. The stammering does not seem to be caused by any particular sounds, as she can pronounce at times every different vowel and consonant without difficulty. She rarely commences a sentence with a stammer, but in the middle of it, or even of a word of one syllable, will stop with her mouth wide open, and keep moving her jaw without uttering any sound, and cannot be persuaded to stop until the word is spoken. When repeating after another person, she

does so without the slightest hesitation ; but then, after reading after another for several days, she read in so monotonous and drawling a manner that it was quite distressing to hear her. She does not keep repeating any sound, as 'pa-pa-pa-tience,' but opens and shuts her mouth till the whole word comes out."

Stuttering, on the other hand, is a vicious utterance manifested by frequent repetitions of initial or other elementary sounds, and always more or less attended with muscular contortions.

That the majority of stutterers belong to what are termed the sanguine and nervous temperaments is true enough ; but it is an error to suppose that they are exclusively of this class. All temperaments yield their quota, and some of the more severe cases which have come to our notice have been subjects of a lymphatic temperament, who, though less tractable than those of any other temperament, rarely relapse after being once cured. The sanguine temperament is more liable to stuttering, and the lymphatic to stammering.

USELESSNESS OF SURGICAL OPERATIONS.

THE utility of surgical operations for stuttering and stammering has been deduced from their successful application in squinting, wry neck and club foot. The premises were wrong, and the conclusion false. In these affections the evil is permanent and always associated with a contraction or shortening of the respective muscles. Stuttering is, on the contrary, frequently temporary ; were it the result of an organic defect it would be equally permanent. Dieffenbach found no organic defect in sixteen cases upon which he operated, nor were there any found in forty cases treated by Blume. Since then the seat of stuttering is not in the tongue, it follows that all operations on that innocent organ are useless. No doubt the patient frequently ceases

stuttering, either from the shock upon the system, or from his strong faith in the efficacy of the operation; but after the wound is healed up, he relapses into his old habit.

Schulthess cites a case of a young workman, a stutterer, whose arm was crushed by machinery so as to require amputation. He remained free from stuttering during the time the wound was suppurating; but the infirmity returned on its being healed up. Klencke also quotes several cases in which stuttering ceased in wounds of the vocal organs, but returned when they healed up. Speaking of operations, he says: "But when the wound heals up, the articulation of the consonants again predominates and he stutters as before. The operators, however, say that they produce an alteration in the muscular and nervous fibers. I have had stutterers who have shown me the scars, but no alteration had taken place, nor have I seen a single case cured by division of the tongue muscles. If such an alteration really occurs, it would only be an auxiliary means paving the way for a cure."

Dr. Claessen, a distinguished German surgeon, after having performed a variety of operations for impediments of speech, says: "Although the results of my experience would lose nothing by comparing them with those published, assuming them to be strictly true, still I am so little satisfied, that I have undertaken no operation of the kind since June 11th, though a number of afflicted persons vehemently desired it. I consider it my duty to dissuade all from performing such operations, as it is exceedingly rare that the fault is in the action of the muscles, or that the evil is remedied by dividing them."

It is ascertained that persons who have stammered in the highest degree, have been remarkable for the perfect integrity of conformation and structure of all the organs of voice and speech; while others who have labored under a faulty or diseased condition of these organs have preserved their articulation unimpaired. The discouragement of the patient upon the failure of the operation on which he depended for a cure, and the want of faith in these operations entertained by the best authorities as well as the injury sometimes done the organs, are strong objections to them.

CLEAR THINKING NECESSARY.

THE great importance of paying paramount attention to the right use of words is thus pointed out by Locke :

“When I began to examine the extent and certainty of our understanding, I found that it had so near a connection with words that, unless their force and manner of signification were first well observed, there would be very little said clearly and pertinently. He that considers the errors, obscurity and confusions that are spread in the world by an ill-use of words, will find some reason to doubt whether language, as it has been employed, has contributed more to the improvement or hindrance of knowledge among mankind. I know there are not words enough in our language to answer all the variety of ideas that enter into man’s discourses and reasonings. But this hinders not that when he uses any term he may have in his mind a determined idea, which he makes it the sign of, and to which he should keep it steadily annexed during that discourse.”

A man may be a clear thinker and a good linguist and yet stammer, still confused thought is often one of the causes of stammering. This is shown in the case of public speakers who, having lost the thread of their discourse, commence stammering as they attempt to right themselves. Such stammering is but temporary, but if one’s thoughts are continually or frequently muddled, the temporary fits of stammering become so frequent as to soon establish a permanent habit, and the habit becomes more and more fixed with the greater and greater frequency of the repetitions. Again, the confusion itself is increased by the stammering which it established, so the one aggravates the other. Attention should be paid to the earliest indications of any halting or confusion in speech. In some cases the *memory* needs improvement and it might be worth while to study this subject in case there is a suspicion that this is the fact. [A useful little work is “How to Make Bad Memory Good,” costing only fifteen cents.]

INFLUENCE OF IMITATION.

THE tendency to imitate the actions of others is so intimately connected with the nature of man, that Aristotle has, by way of distinction, called man an imitating animal. We do not speak here of voluntary and deliberate imitation, but of that almost irresistible propensity to catch and to repeat the expressions and actions of other human beings with whom we come in contact. This tendency exhibits self in its greatest intensity in childhood and early youth. Long before children can appreciate our motives, they imitate our actions. The faculty is instinctive, both in man and many animals, and differs from the power of voluntary imitation, possessed by man in the highest degree, that it is a deliberate act, determined by various motives.

The most familiar illustration of involuntary imitation is the irresistible inclination to imitate the act of yawning; which is so little under the influence of the will, that sometimes the more we resist the execution of the movement, the greater is the desire to effect it. The history of epidemics, religious revivals, etc., and the medical records, afford the most conclusive proofs of the infectious nature of emotions, and their physical manifestations, convulsions, fits, etc.

The imitative propensity exhibits itself in earliest childhood, and nothing is more common than to see infants assume the gestures and habits of those by whom they are constantly surrounded. This susceptibility may, it is true, differ in various subjects in degree, but not in kind. There are in fact but few irregular actions, manifested externally, which are not instinctively imitated by children. It is therefore beyond question that, like squinting, winking with the eyes, and many other habits, both stammering and stuttering arise in many cases from unconscious, or sometimes voluntary imitation. Seeing then that the habit is so easily contracted, we are scarcely justified in considering it as an hereditary affection even in cases where one of the parents

stammers. In by far the greater number of cases which came under our observation, we found that the evil was neither hereditary nor congenital, but could be traced to the prodigious influence of voluntary or involuntary imitation. One stammerer or stutterer in a family is quite sufficient to infect the rest; and so rapid is the contagion to a susceptible child, that we have known those who have contracted the habit by a single interview with a stutterer. We must here strongly warn all young persons against stammering either in mimicry, or for the baser purpose of deceiving their teachers, in order to avoid some task, as some very severe cases have confessed their serious impediment to be the result of one of these practices. A clergyman writes to the following effect: "I was entirely free of it till I was five years of age, when at that time of life there was a gentleman who was in the habit of occasionally frequenting my father's house, who indeed stammered very badly, and I distinctly remember one afternoon trying to imitate him, when unfortunately he heard me, and was very indignant, and so ashamed were my parents at my conduct, that after he had gone, I was taken to task and punished severely for it, and ever since that night I have been afflicted with this most distressing malady."

It would be easy to adduce numerous instances of this kind from our own experience, but we shall only add two illustrations, so graphically described by an eminent authority on this as on other subjects. "I knew of a young man who used, for his little brothers' and sisters' amusement, to act some stammering relation. One day he found that his acting had become grim earnest. He had set up a bad habit, and he was enslaved by it. He was utterly terrified; he looked on his sudden stammers (by a not absurd moral sequence) as a judgment from God for mocking an afflicted person; and suffered great misery till he was cured."

"One of the most frightful stammers I ever knew began at seven years old, and could only be traced to the child's having watched the contortions of a stammering lawyer in a court of justice. But the child had a brain at once excited and weakened by a brain fever, and was of a painfully nervous temperament."

DR. HUNT'S HINTS TO PARENTS

MANAGEMENT OF CHILDREN'S ARTICULATION.

PARENTS cannot be too careful in watching the development of the organs of voice of their children. All defects but those of utterance receive immediate attention, and why should the "human voice divine" alone go uncared for? If parents only knew how many a sad life has been spent from this early neglect, they would take warning in time. Many of the defects of children's articulation are very slight, but being neglected they gradually develop into serious impediments. Some children, with an active brain, begin with speaking so rapidly that their organs will not work at the same rate. Some begin to speak before they have any clear idea of what they are going to say. It is the business of education to counteract this youthful tendency. It can be done; but not until parents really care more for their children's health than they do for their success in life. It is useless for parents to deny that they care more for the wordly prospects of their children than they do for their health, while their practice contradicts their words. Dr. Eich, after touching on the great variety of defects in the speech of young children, says: "All defects of articulation may degenerate into stammering or stuttering, especially if they commence in childhood." The proverb "that a stitch in time may save nine" is as true in this case as in any other.

It can, however, hardly be credited by those who have not had experience in the matter, how great is the neglect of all physiological laws even in the education of children of the richest classes. Education now seems to be a process of cramming the heads of children with dry facts; facts that are not only useless, but which, in the majority of instances, are not of the least service in after life, and really hurtful as a process for the development of the mind. How can a permanent cure of stuttering be expected if the pupils cannot spare the time requisite for so desirable an

end, and when the after treatment at home is so absurd? It must be remembered that the irritability of the nervous system, which originally might have produced stuttering, still exists, and the object of all rational education should be to allay this irritability.

I have written and talked to parents for hours on this subject; but I was told that the children were backward, and that they must be worked up to take a good place at public school. They were backward, forsooth, because, until they were cured, they stuttered so badly that they were unable to read. After treatment they return home, and have double pressure put on to make up for lost time, notwithstanding all remonstrances. Parents too frequently will not believe that children require very careful treatment for a considerable time, and the especial avoidance of all strain on the nervous system. But although parents and guardians are unwilling to learn from the dictates of reason, they not unfrequently learn from experience. A boy is placed under treatment, returns home speaking well, is put to work, neglects all his vocal exercises, and disregards all physical systematic training, and in a short time his impediment returns; and then, forsooth, it is not the strain on the nervous system, etc., which has produced this: but it was the fault of the system by which he was cured. He has had a relapse! The relief is not permanent! As well might all men say who go out and take cold, that it is a return of the cold which they had some three or six months before. As with a cold so with a stammer, the oftener and longer it has existed, the more liable are persons to it. As long as parents will disregard all warning as to the general management, so long must they expect sometimes their children to relapse.

All children who have stuttered and been under treatment, require some extra care and exercise of the vocal apparatus. They often cannot learn to read until they are cured, and if they do it is most imperfectly, with little or no modulation or flexibility of the voice. They have spoken little owing to their difficulty, and therefore the whole mechanism requires a careful and systematic training. This requires both time and attention. but one would fancy that

it would be gladly given by those parents who know what a great working power the "gift of the gab" is to raise oneself in the world. The value of a good voice is well known to all; but it is not so generally known that a good voice is the result of much attention and labor. To slightly alter the words of Pope :

"Free ease in 'speaking' comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance."

Nothing then can be more absurd than for parents to expect an effect without an adequate cause. Defective speech can be cured, and it may be reproduced, like any other affection of the mind or body; and the present mode of cramming the brain (falsely called education, which means to bring out, not to stuff in), is the very process to produce stuttering in some cases, and to reproduce it in others.

A susceptible, timid child, constantly in awe of an ignorant parent or a brutal master, may be made to stutter by cruel treatment. And here I say boldly that the stupidity and cruelty with which stammering children are too often treated, is enough to rouse indignation. They are told, "You can help it if you like." As if they knew how to help it. They are asked, "Why cannot you speak like other people?" As if it were not torture enough to see other people speaking as they cannot; to see the rest of the world walking smoothly along a road which they cannot find, and are laughed at for not finding; while those who walk proudly along cannot tell them how they keep on it. They are even told, "You do it on purpose!" As if they were not writhing with shame every time they open their mouths. All this begets in the stammerer a habit of secesy, of feeling himself cut off from his kindred; of brooding over his thoughts, of fancying himself under a mysterious curse, which sometimes (as I have known it to do) tempts him to actual suicide; sometimes (as I have known it to do) seems the possession of a demon. If it proceeded from an organic defect, a deformity, he would know that he could not dance. If he was blind he would not expect to see. But when he knowes there is no deformity, that his organs are just as perfect as other people's,

the very seeming causelessness of the malady makes it utterly intolerable.

In early infancy the first inclination to stammer is little noticed, and it is only about the period of the second dentition that the attention of the parent is fairly roused. The hope which many parents entertain that the affection may spontaneously decline, is rarely realized. The defect, on the contrary, commonly increases with approaching puberty, and sometimes becomes then developed in its worst form.

Parents, therefore, cannot be too often reminded that the proper time for attention is the period when the infirmity first manifests itself; the evil then may be more easily removed; while the cure becomes more difficult and tedious when indistinct articulation has become habitual.

HEALTH AND STAMMERING.

A WRITER over the signature of "A Minute Philosopher," says :

"Whosoever can afford an enervated body and an abject character, the stammerer cannot. With him it is a question of life and death. He must make a man of himself, or be liable to his tormentor to the last.

"Let him therefore avoid all base perturbations of mind; all cowardice, servility, meanness, vanity, and hankering after admiration; for these all will make many a man, by a just judgment, stammer on the spot. Let him, for the same reason, eschew all anger, peevishness, haste, even pardonable eagerness. In a word, let him eschew the root of all evil, selfishness and self seeking; for he will surely find that whensoever he begins thinking about himself, then is the dumb devil of stammering at his elbow. Let him eschew, too, all superstition, whether of that abject kind which fancies that it can please God by a starved body and

a hang-dog visage, which pretends to be afraid to look mankind in the face, or of that more openly self-conceited kind which upsets the balance of the reason by hysterical raptures and self-glorifying assumptions. Let him eschew, lastly, all which can weaken either nerves or digestion ; all sexual excesses, all intemperance in drink or in food, whether gross or effeminate, remembering that it is as easy to be unwholesomely gluttonous over hot slops and cold ices as over beef and beer.

“Let him avoid those same hot slops (to go on with the *corpus sanum*), and all else which will injure his wind and his digestion, and let him betake himself to all manly exercises which will put him into wind, and keep him in it. Let him, if he can, ride, and ride hard, remembering (so does horse exercise expand the lungs and oxygenate the blood) there has been at least one frightful stammerer ere now who spoke perfectly plain as long as he was in the saddle. Let him play rackets and fives, row and box ; for all these amusements strengthen those muscles of the chest and abdomen which are certain to be in this case weak. Above all, let him box ; for so will “the noble art of self defense” become to him over and above a healing art. If he doubt this assertion, let him (or, indeed, any narrow chested porer over desks) hit out right and left for five minutes at a point on the wall as high as his own face (hitting, of course, not from the elbow, like a woman, but from the loin, like a man, and keeping his breath during the exercise as long as he can), and he will soon become aware of his weak point by a severe pain in the epigastric region, in the same spot which pains him after a convulsion of stammering. Then let him try boxing regularly, daily ; and he will find that it teaches him to look a man not merely in the face, but in the very eye’s core ; to keep his chest expanded, his lungs full of air ; to be calm and steady under excitement ; and lastly, to use all those muscles of the torso on which deep and healthy respiration depends. Let him carry himself with the erect and noble port which is all but peculiar to the soldier, but ought to be the common habit of every man ; let him learn to march ; and more, to trot under arms without losing breath ; and by such means make himself an active, healthy,

and valiant man. Always remembering, however, to avoid *strains* and all forms and degrees of *excessive* exertion, doing all things in moderation but with perseverance.

“Meanwhile, let him learn again the art of speaking; and having learned, think before he speaks, and say his say calmly, with self-respect, as a man who does not talk at random, and has a right to a courteous answer. Let him fix in his mind that there is nothing on earth to be ashamed of, save doing wrong, and no being to be feared save Almighty God; and so go on making the best of the body and the soul which heaven has given him, and I will warrant that in a few months his old misery of stammering will lie behind him, as an ugly and all but impossible dream when one awakes in the morning.”

DR. VOISIN'S THEORY.

GIRLS and ladies are seldom known to stammer. With them, the organ of language is larger than in males, and they are more free and copious in speech. They commence early to talk to their dolls, play “keep house, teach school,” correct the dog and the cat, talk to the bird, and keep up a vocal chatter generally. Nor will the command of an impatient and inconsiderate parent, to “Hold your tongue!” avail, with little girls. They must talk, laugh, or cry, while the boys whistle, play ball, fly kites, roll hoops, play horse or hide-and-seek, drive nails, bore holes, saw wood, whittle, build boats or carts; harness the dog or the goat, and do other similar service where much yelling and little talking is required. Girls are much more with their mothers, and conversation, including “small talk,” can go on almost perpetually, all day long; and it is a fact, ladies become by practice far the best and most natural talkers. Who ever knew a lady to stammer?

Boys are more rough, blunt, and uncouth in manners and conversation, and are more frequently commanded to "hush!—shut up!" "stop your clatter!" "be quiet!" etc., and told that "boys should be seen, not heard," and they come to think more than they talk. Later in life they are expected to read aloud, tell what they saw or heard, and they blunder, misplace their words, and form the habit of stammering.

All the organs of speech are precisely the same in those who do and who do not stammer. It is a mental and not a physiological or bodily infirmity, and should be treated accordingly. This view is corroborated by a French writer, who says :

"Stammering has been generally ascribed to some physical impediment in the tongue, the palate, or some other of the organs of speech ; but it is easy to show that its cause is of a very different origin, and that it rarely, if ever, arises from simple malformation of the vocal organs."

It is justly observed by M. F. Voisin, M.D., of Paris, who is (or was) himself afflicted to a great degree with this defect of speech, and who is therefore no very incompetent judge, that the anatomical inspection of the vocal organs does not demonstrate any vice of confirmation. "The persons," says he, "that I have seen, and who, like myself, spoke with difficulty, had not, as is alleged, the tongue larger than other people, nor its ligaments laxer, nor its freemum excessively long, nor the teeth so placed as to present any obstacle. It is incontestible, indeed, that all these lesions exist, and I have myself seen every one of them; but when they do exist, they give rise to phenomena totally different. To be convinced of this it is only necessary to examine the individuals in whom they present themselves. We shall remark, it is true, a greater or less alteration of pronunciation, but never the characteristic symptoms of stammering."

If physical malformation were really the general cause of stammering, the effect would necessarily be permanent, and would affect the same sounds every time they recurred; but the reverse of this is the truth ; for it is well known that, on occasions of excitement, stammerers often display a flu-

ency and facility of utterance the very opposite of their habitual state, and that, as Dr. Voisin expresses it, "*Lors-qu'ils se mettent en colere, ils blasphement avec une energie qui n'a point echappee aux hommes les moins observateurs.*"* But passion or excitement can never remove a physical cause, make a large tongue small, set crooked teeth straight, or tighten the ligaments of the tongue, and then let these imperfections return as soon as the storm is over. Such causes may make a person speak thick, or low, or indistinctly; but his utterance will still be as equable and free from stammer as before, and therefore the true stammer must depend on a totally different antecedent.

Dr Voisin proves very clearly that the real cause is irregularity in the nervous action of the parts which combine to produce speech. This is shown by analyzing speech. The natural sounds, or vowels, are simple, and require only one kind of muscular action for their production; hence they are almost always under command. The artificial, or compound, sounds (hence denominated consonants) are complex, and require several distinct and successive combinations of a variety of muscles; and it is they alone that excite stammering. But it is the brain that directs and combines all voluntary motions; and consequently every disturbing cause, not local and not permanent, can affect the voluntary motions of speech only through the medium of the brain; and irregular action of the brain must thus be the indispensable antecedent or cause of the effect—stammering. This will be obvious on reviewing the exciting causes of that infirmity.

First. It is no unusual thing to see a person, who is perfectly fluent in conversation, and who has never been known to stammer, become grievously affected with it, if called upon unexpectedly to address a public audience. Every one will admit that, in this case, there is no physical impediment to utterance, but that the cause is in the brain, or organ of the mind, and that it consists in irregular nervous impulse sent to the organs of speech, and proceeding from

* When they get angry, they blaspheme with an energy which cannot fail to impress the least observing.

a conflict between the desire to speak well, the fear of speaking ill, or perhaps a consciousness of a paucity or bad arrangement of the ideas which he is expected to communicate, or it may be a dearth of words in which to clothe them. In every instance the essential circumstance is a conflict, or absence of coöperation among the active faculties, necessarily giving rise to a plurality, instead of to a unity of nervous purposes, and consequently to a plurality, instead of to a unity of simultaneous muscular combinations; and the irregular plurality of purposes and of actions thence resulting constitutes exactly what is called stammering.

A striking illustration of the truth of this view is the fact, that stammering, or irregularity of action, is an affection not peculiar to the muscles concerned in the production of speech, but is common to these and to all the muscles under the power of the will. Wherever two or more diverging purposes of nearly equal power assail the mind, and prompt to opposite courses of action at the same time, there stammering appears, whether it be in the muscles of the vocal organs or in those of the feet. We recollect a ludicrous example of this in a boy at a dancing-school ball in the assembly rooms. He was dancing very easily and gracefully, and with much inward tranquility and satisfaction, when, on a sudden, raising his head, his wonder was attracted and dazzled by the unusual splendor of the chandeliers, which he had not before noticed. His feet continued to move, but with evidently less unity of purpose than before, and after making a few unmeaning and rather eccentric movements, or stammering with his feet instead of with his tongue, he fell on his back on the floor, and awoke from his reverie.

Secondly. A person unexpectedly beset by danger stammers from head to foot, till his presence of mind gives him a unity of purpose, and decides what he is to do. In this instance, it is undeniably the simultaneous existence of opposite mental impulses that produces the effect. For the same reason, the sudden recollection, during an animated discourse, of something forgotten, causes a temporary stammer and unsteadiness of attitude. In short, a multiplicity

of impulses causes contrariety of action, and contrariety of action constitutes stammering.

"The influence which the encephalon exercises over pronunciation" says Dr. Voisin, "is equally established by the observations continually furnished by orators, advocates, and public speakers. If the intellectual operations are carried on with rapidity, if the ideas are clear, numerous, and well connected, the pronunciation will be free, easy, and agreeable; if, on the contrary, the march of intellect is slow and difficult, and the ideas are confused and ill arranged, the elocution will partake of the internal trouble, and the orator, thus accidentally a stammerer, will soon have fatigued his audience by his repetitions and disagreeable articulations." We have seen the same thing arise from a deficient supply of words to clothe the ideas that presented themselves; the contrariety arising in this instance from the ineffectual struggle of a small organ of language to keep pace with the workings of the larger organs of other intellectual powers.

Thirdly. The effect of wine and spirituous liquors prove the influence of the brain in the production and cure of stammering. Look at that individual, who, without committing any great excess, is moderately excited by a few glasses of wine; lately he was sad, silent, and spiritless; now, what a metamorphosis! he is gay, talkative, and witty. Let him continue to drink, and go beyond the measure of his judgment, his head will become embarrassed, and the fumes of the wine trouble his intellectual functions. The muscles, subjected to the guidance of a will without power, contract feebly, and the most confused and marked stammering succeeds to the fluent pronunciation so lately observed, and which depended on the powerful action of the brain on the organs of speech.

Fourthly. From the earliest antiquity accidental stammering has been noticed by physicians as frequently the precursor of apoplexy and palsy, which could happen only from the preceding affection of the brain acting on the organs of speech.

Fifthly. M. Voisin himself remarks the well known fact, that stammerers are generally very sensitive and easily

irritated, and, at the same time, timid and retiring; thus affording the essential contrariety of emotions in its strongest degree. M. Voisin forcibly delineates this state, when he says, "I shall never forget when I had finished my studies, and was entering on life, my troubled countenance, my embarrassment and monosyllabic answers, and the silence which fear and timidity almost always enforced upon me, gave to many people such an idea of my character, that I may dispense with quoting the epithet which they were pleased to bestow upon me."

Sixthly. Certain emotions, by exciting the brain, direct such a powerful nervous influx upon the organs of speech, that it not only frees the stammerer from his infirmity for a time, but has even sufficed to deliver the dumb from their bondage, and enabled them to speak. Esquirol gives a curious example of this fact. A dumb man had long endured contempt and bad usage from his wife; but being one day more grossly maltreated than usual, he got into such a furious rage, that he regained the use of his tongue, and repaid with usury the execrations which his tender mate had so long lavished upon him. This shows how closely the brain influences speech.

Seventhly. Speech is the conductor of ideas, and is useless where none exist. Accordingly it is noticed that idiots, although they hear well and have a sound conformation of the organs of speech, and a power of emitting all the natural sounds, are either dumb or speak very imperfectly.

Eighthly. Under the influence of contending emotions the tongue either moves without firmness or remains altogether immoveable. This occurs most frequently when cautiousness or fear and veneration or respect are the opposing feelings. Stammering from this cause diminishes imperceptibly, and sometimes even disappears, in proportion as the individual regains his presence of mind and masters his internal impression. "The observations," says Dr. M. Voisin, "which I have the sad privilege of making on myself every day, confirm what is here advanced. I have often intercourse with men for whom I feel so much respect, that it is almost impossible for me to speak to them when I appear before them. But if the conversation, of

which they at first furnish the whole, goes on and becomes animated, recovering soon from my first emotion, I shake off all little considerations, and, raising myself to their height, I discuss with them without fear, and without the slightest difficulty in my pronunciation." This indicates the supreme influence of the nervous influx on the movements of the vocal muscles, and it is curiously supported and illustrated by a fact mentioned by M. Itard, of a boy of eleven, who was excessively at fault whenever he attempted to speak in the presence of persons looking at him, but in whom the stammering instantly disappeared as soon as by shutting out the light, he ceased to be visible. This is explicable only on the theory of opposite mental emotions.

Ninthly. As the individual advances in age, and acquires consistency and unity of character, the infirmity becomes less and less marked, and even frequently disappears altogether. In the same way it is generally marked more in the morning than in the evening, because the brain has not then assumed its full complement of activity, nor been exposed to the numerous stimuli which beset it in the ordinary labors of the day.

A late writer seems to us to mistake the effect for the cause, when he says that stammerers, being deprived of the means of communication with their fellows, become reserved and timid in society, and of exquisite sensibility; for according to the view we have been unfolding, the natural timidity and sensibility, instead of being the result, are in fact the chief causes of the stammer or defect in pronunciation. And we think this confirmed by his own observation, that old age is generally a cure, and that "old men," when interrogated on the causes of the amendment, generally attribute it to their having become less hasty, or much more moderate and considerate, and in a much less hurry to force out their ideas.

The cerebral and mental cause of stammering explains the effects of education and the rational mode of cure.

Speech being the vehicle of ideas, and of no use but to convey them, it is obvious that one important condition in securing a distinct articulation is to have previously acquired distinct ideas. Idiots, having few ideas, never learn to

speak. For the same reason, children ought not to be forced to speak in the way that is generally done. This ill-timed haste has the opposite effect from that desired, for the subjects of it speak later and with greater confusion; and the extreme attention that is paid to their almost every word, dispenses them from distinct articulation, and causes a bad pronunciation for their whole lives. This is remarked very often in children brought up in towns. They speak earlier but much less distinctly than those reared in the country. Learning by rote is held to be very pernicious, as it accustoms the child to negligent and unmeaning pronunciation in his repetition of the same words.

It is remarked, indeed, that those who are late of speaking never speak so distinctly as the others; but here the effect is often mistaken for the cause, for the child is long of speaking only because his vocal organs are naturally embarrassed, and not because they have lain idle from the want of speech. If the organs were not constitutionally impeded, why should any one child be longer of speaking than another? The child that stammers has quite as much use for speaking as any other, and in general he is stimulated to an infinitely greater degree to exert his power of speech. Parents become uneasy, and by their ill-judged efforts at hastening improvement, often cause the very effect they seek to avoid.

From this view it will appear that the cause of stammering is to be looked for in removing the exciting causes, and in bringing the vocal muscles into harmonious action by determined and patient exercise. The opposite emotions, so generally productive of stammering, may, especially in early life, be gradually got rid of by a judicious moral treatment—by directing the attention of the child to the existence of these emotions as causes—by inspiring him with friendly confidence—by exciting him resolutely to shun any attempt at pronunciation when he feels himself unable to master it—by exercising himself when alone and free from emotion, in singing, talking, and reading aloud, and for a length of time, so as to habituate the muscles to simultaneous and systematic action—and, we may add, as a very effectual remedy, by increasing the natural difficulty

in such a way as to require a strong and undivided mental effort to accomplish the utterance of a sound, and thereby add to the amount of nervous energy distributed to the organs of speech. The practice of Demosthenes is a most excellent example. He cured himself of inveterate stammering by filling his mouth with pebbles, and accustoming himself to recitations in that state. It required strong local action, and a concentrated attention, to emit a sound without choking himself or allowing the pebbles to drop from his mouth; and this was precisely the natural remedy to apply to opposite and contending emotions and divided attention.

Demosthenes adopted the other most effectual part of the means of cure. He exercised himself alone, and free from distressing emotions, to such a degree, that he constructed a subterraneous cabinet on purpose for perfect retirement, and sometimes passed two or three months without ever leaving it, having previously shaven one half of his head, that he might not be able to appear in public when the temptation should come upon him. And the perfect success which attended this plan is universally known. His voice passed from a weak, uncertain, and unmanageable to a full, powerful, and even melodious tone, and became so remarkably flexible as to accommodate itself with ease to the very numerous and delicate inflections of the Greek tongue. But as a complete cure, or harmonious action of the vocal muscles, can be obtained only by the repetition of the muscular action till a habit or tendency to act becomes established, it is evident that perseverance is an essential element in its accomplishment, and that without this the temporary amendment obtained at first by the excitement consequent upon a trial of any means very soon disappears, and leaves the infirmity altogether unmitigated.

M. Itard, whom we have already mentioned, recommends very strongly, where it can be done, to force children to speak in a foreign language, by giving them a foreign governess or tutor; and the propriety of this advice is very palpable when we consider that it requires a more powerful and concentrated effort to speak and to pronounce a foreign than a native tongue, and that it is pre-

cisely a strong, undivided, and long-continued mental effort that is necessary to effect a cure.

It is scarcely necessary to add, that debility,* in which this, in common with many other forms of nervous disease, often originates in the young, must be obviated by a due supply of nourishing food, country air, regular exercise, and, though last not least, by cheerful society, kindness, and encouragement.

Finally. Having shown that stammering is only an impediment, caused by nervous excitement, sensitiveness, diffidence and a lack of confidence and self-reliance, and not by disease or a lack of the necessary organs of speech, we may state that the careful attention of parents to their children from the earliest infancy, not only permitting but encouraging them to talk freely, copiously, and fluently, and to sing, read aloud, and thus give expression to their thoughts, feelings, and emotions, would remove all danger of their ever becoming stammerers. Of course *correct* pronunciation should be insisted upon, and while encouraging the child to exercise his talkativeness when he feels prompted to do so, it is bad to induce children to begin talking much before they are old enough to properly form the words. A child should never be encouraged in any affection or peculiarity of speech which, though possibly seeming "pretty" or "cunning" in a child, may eventually in a confirmed and distressing impediment.

* There are certain practices to some extent prevalent among our youths, which have a tendency to induce a general debility of the system as well as, in some instances, specific ailments. Stammering though by no means proving the indulgence referred to, may be one of the results, or may be aggravated thereby. Many stammerers undoubtedly are never guilty of these habits, but debility from these or *any* causes is, as already shown, a cause or aggravation. Any reader who lacks vigorous constitution or bodily health, whatever may be the reason, and in a *majority* of such cases there is no fault, would do well to read the little work on "Debility, Physical and Mental, including Consumption, Dyspepsia, Nervousness, &c., &c., with Causes, Prevention and Cure, with full and simple instructions for Self Treatment by means within reach of all, *without one cent expense.*" It advertises no doctor or medicine, is entirely free from all pernicious matter of any kind, and will be found a useful and reliable guide for all who wish to gain health and vigor by simple, sure, safe, and inexpensive means. 120 pages, 75 cents. [Ready in Feb. 1870.

DR. W. W. HALL ON STAMMERING.

IT is often observed that persons in a state of intense excitement are incoherent, and do not express themselves connectedly; this is simply acute stammering, resulting from too great an amount of nervous power or influence going out in a specific direction by the mind being too intently fixed on one thing, on one idea, on one effort. The always efficient remedy is to divide the mind's attention in any way that will cause deliberation or composure. Twenty years ago it was considered a great surgical feat in the amphitheater of the University of New York to bring in the most inveterate stutterer, and in five minutes he would go away before the wondering eyes of the students, perfectly cured, simply by having had a common knitting-needle, or its substitute, thrust through the tongue. The philosophy of this was, that unless the tongue was moved with deliberation more or less pain was excited; but the misfortune was, that as soon as the wound was healed, the man stammered as before.

It is related in physiological works, that a laborer, the most inveterate stammerer in London, became possessed with the idea that he would make a good play-actor, and nothing that his friends could say or do could induce him to forego his resolve. The unusual circumstances gave a crowded house, and the young man went through his part without the stammer of a single syllable; because, while one effort of the mind was to remember the words and the gestures, another, a divided one, was to the utterances of his part.

My son, at the age of six, stammered inveterately. He was very impulsive and of a highly nervous temperament. Holding the views of this article, I would not allow him to be scolded or ridiculed, or have the infirmity remarked upon by any member of the family, because either of these would but increase the embarrassment or want of presence of mind; but whenever he came to me for anything, I would

say in a kindly, encouraging way : " Now, Bobby, if you will ask for it in a slow, plain way, you shall have it." Then, without any instruction, he would say : " Will fa-ther please give Robert a piece of can-dy ?" thus distinctly enunciating every syllable. I noticed at the same time, that the little fellow, at each syllable, would make a motion to strike his hand against his thigh as he stood. Here was nature's instinct coming to his aid ; part of the mind, as it were, was directed to the hand keeping time to each syllable, another part to obtaining the object in view. In a few weeks little Robert ceased to stammer altogether, and has never since had the slightest trouble in that direction.

Hence, the cure for stammering is to cultivate mental deliberation in the way most easily available to each particular person.

Stammering is sometimes the result of habit or carelessness ; at others, it succeeds a long attack of sickness. It is a kind of St. Vitus' dance of the tongue. Not unfrequently it is brought on by the harsh treatment or inveterate ill-nature of parents, teachers, or superiors, in habitually meeting those under them with threatenings, scolding, or fault-finding. We have met before now with a most miserable class of human, or rather inhuman beings, who scarcely ever enter a room, where are children, or servants, or dependents, without the expression of some disapprobation or complaint. This has very naturally the effect to confuse and intimidate a child, especially one of a highly nervous or excitable temperament : while steadiness and composure are the very antipodes of stammering, which is essentially the throwing out too much nervous power, sending too much nervous influence to the muscles which are employed in speaking ; the result is a want of proper control of those muscles. Hence, whatever diminishes the nervous supply to those parts, whatever directs the nervous flow to some other part of the body, diminishes the stammering in the same proportion. This is the principle of cure in all cases of permanent cure, and even in the temporary relief afforded, in the cases previously referred to, by running the knitting-needle through the tongue. This cured only until the tongue got well, because, while the tongue

was sore from the barbarous operation, the extra nervous energy was expended in the instinctive effort to refrain from any other than a careful movement of the tongue. The expedient of Demosthenes in speaking with little pebbles in his mouth, was in the same direction. We will venture the assertion that no man ever stammered in "popping the question," nor a young lady halt out y-ye-ye-yes. Instinct itself prompts a cure. As it is a life-long calamity to have a son or daughter grow up a stutterer, I trust that these hints may be turned to practical account by those whom they may concern. Anything else done at the time of uttering each syllable, divides the attention, gives two outlets to the extra nervous flow, and the remedy is complete; make a mark, pull a string, turn a leaf, stamp the foot—any one of them will effect a cure in a reasonable time.*

* Many anecdotes might be given, to show the instinctive resort to such little tricks as Dr. Hall mentions, to promote easy utterance. Among public speakers, the practice of twirling the thumbs, fingering the edge of desk or stand, or similar devices, is almost universal, though in most cases, probably, unconscious. Possibly a speaker's "notes" are useful in this way, in addition to their more direct purpose of refreshing his memory. The helplessness to which their deprivation will sometimes reduce a speaker is amusingly shown in a couple of stories, to which the reader would doubtless be able to add others of similar purport.

The first relates to a wager made between two friends of a celebrated lawyer, that he would lose a certain case if deprived of a little rubber band, such as is used for securing files of letters, which he was accustomed to twirl on his thumbs during his argument. This band lay on a table in the court-room, within easy reach of his hand, but was slyly removed by the wagers. When he rose to address the court and jury, he reached for his rubber, and, not finding it, groped about the table for it, at the same time attempting to go on with his speech. His efforts were futile; on the very first point in his argument he became confused, faltered, and finally came to a very lame conclusion, actually losing his case.

The second story is very similar to the foregoing, except that a *button* was the important article in this case. There was one particular button on his coat which the speaker, a political orator of considerable repute, had a habit of taking hold of and fingering during his discourse. This was privately removed by a political opponent, and the speaker—we believe, in this case, on the "stump"—after clutching frantically at his coat for some time, helplessly reiterating his "Fellow citizens!" several times, and endeavoring in vain to collect his scattered thoughts, gave up in despair, and resigned the floor to the opposing speaker.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

A FORTY DOLLAR CURE FOR STAMMERING.—We have been asked if there is any reliance to be placed in a certain “Professor” who advertises “to cure the worst cases of stammering, or ‘stuttering,’ for \$40; and second, if we can advise any remedy, as she has a son badly affected. We will answer both questions by saying that the secret for which the \$40 is asked, has long been known, and that she can have the secret from us for twenty-five cents, viz.: the twenty-five cents she has paid for this book. Here it is: Let the stammerer begin at once to beat time for every word he utters; either in talking or reading, just as if singing the words. If this does not stop the hesitancy, then try beating time to every syllable, and afterward gradually run into beating for words, and then for sentences. The beating can be done with the foot, or with a hand, or one finger of the hand, or by striking the finger and thumb together. Thus: “When (beat) in (beat) the (beat) course (beat) of (beat) hu- (beat) man (beat) e (beat) vents, (beat) etc.” A persistent course of measuring the words until the stammerer can read and talk straight forward, though slowly, for an hour at a time, will doubtless overcome the habit of stammering. We do not say that this will always effect a perfect cure in the worst cases, where the stammering or habit has been long established, but from the nature of the defect, it must be greatly modified, if not cured. And at least here is all you will get if you send your \$40 to the “Professor,” who has no more skill, and no more right to the “secret” than we have.

IMPEDIMENTS in the speech may be cured, where there is no malformation of the organs of articulation, by perseverance for three or four months in the simple remedy of reading aloud, with the teeth closed, for at least one or two hours in the course of each day.—MRS. S. J. HALE.

WHEN children see anything remarkable (in their view), they are always in a great hurry to tell of it, and often the words crowd to the tongue faster than they fall from it, which induces stammering. On such occasions, the parent should instantly hush the child, until its excitement is over, and then give it the privilege to make the relation calmly. This is a good suggestion. It is known that an inveterate stutterer can be cured by practicing some method which requires him to speak deliberately and in measured time. Some "Professors" who cure stammerers, require their pupils to beat time with the finger at each word, the same as in singing, and in this way the habit of control over the organs of speech is acquired. But prevention is always better than cure, and a little care of the first will entirely break up the tendency to stammer, which children often have.—J. T. HASSETT.

STAMMERING may be the result of disease, as paralysis, congestion of the head, or fever. It, however, very often exists without any apparent cause, and in these cases, a certain mental training, particularly in childhood, will prove far more beneficial than any medical treatment, and will, as a general thing, be entirely successful. The patient should be advised to read aloud, slowly and distinctly, enunciating clearly each word and syllable, at the same time beating time with the finger or foot. When talking he should avoid excitement, keeping the mind perfectly clear, and pronounce every word slowly, distinctly.

A course of mental training like this, will, if taken in time, be sufficient to break up the habit.—E. M. GUEUNSEY, M. D., HOMEOPATHIST.

THE following is recommended as an exercise for overcoming the tendency to stammer. This sentence is to be repeated fast: Theopolis Thistle the thistle sifter sifted a sifter full of unsifted thistles, and if Theopolis Thistle the thistle sifter sifted a sifter full of unsifted thistles where's the sifter full of sifted thistles that Theopolis Thistle the thistle sifter sifted.

H. W. R. says that his father cured himself of stammering by the following simple means: "Take a large kernel of barley or wheat, or a smooth pebble, and place it under the root of the tongue in the center, and as far back as possible, and keep it there all the time, except when eating or sleeping, till the cure is complete."

A RAPID and emphatic recital of the following simple narrative is an infallible cure for lisping: "Hobbs meets Snobbs and Nobbs; Hobbs bobs to Snobbs and Nobbs; Hobbs nobbs with Snobbs and robs Nobbs's fobs." "This is," says Nobbs, "the worst of Hobb's jobs and Snobb's sobs."

ACCIDENTS OF SPEECH.

THESE are somewhat akin to *impediments* of speech inasmuch as they result from a confusion of ideas, which is also a frequent cause of stammering. Pat has long labored under the imputation of making more "accidents" with the tongue than any of his fellow mortals; but it can be very readily shown that the "bull" is not necessarily indigenous to Irish soil.

A Frenchman named Calino, who died in Paris not many years ago, was remarkable for a bovine tendency. There is a letter of his in existence which reads as follows: "My dear friend—I left my knife at your lodgings yesterday. Pray send it to me if you find it. Yours, Calino. P. S.—Never mind sending the knife; I have found it."

There is a note to his wife, which he sent home with a basket of provisions, the postscript to which read: "You will find my letter at the bottom of the basket. If you should fail to do so let me know as soon as possible."

A lady once asked the Abbé de Matignon how old he

was. "Why, I am an only thirty-two," said he, "but I count myself thirty-three, because a little boy was born a year before I was and died, evidently keeping me back a whole year by accident."

It was a Scotch woman who said that the butcher of her town only killed half a beast at a time. It was a Dutchman who said a pig had no earmarks except a short tail; and it was a British magistrate who, being told by a vagabond that he was not married, responded: "That's a good thing for your wife."

At a negro ball, in lieu of "Not transferable," on the tickets, a notice was posted over the door, "No gentleman admitted unless he comes himself."

An American lecturer of note solemnly said one evening: "Parents, you may have children, or, if you have not, your daughters may have."

A western editor once wrote; "A correspondent asks whether the battle of Waterloo occurred before or after the commencement of the Christian era. We answer it did."

A Maine editor says a pumpkin in that state grew so large that eight men could stand around it; which statement was only equalled by that of the hoosier who saw a flock of pigeons fly so low that he could shake a stick at them.

Those two observing men, one of whom said that he always noticed when he lived through the month of May he lived through the year, and the other of whom said at a wedding that he had remarked that more women than men had been married that year, were neither of them Irishmen.

The intimacy of Preston King with President Johnson has reminded somebody of a good thing which occurred at the Baltimore convention, which has not before got into print. Mr. King, who was physically a complete Falstaff, rose to make a speech. He was not heard in the remote corners of the hall; and it was then that little Brandagee, of Connecticut, jumped up and shouted: "Mr. President, the distance around the gentleman is so great that it is impossible to hear him unless he speaks louder!" Of course, a roar of laughter followed, in which the eloquent three-hundred pounder joined.

HOW TO GAIN CONFIDENCE.

As bashfulness and want of confidence are prolific sources of stammering, and as what may at first be only temporary embarrassment may by frequent repetition degenerate into a habit of defective speech, we think the following remarks relative to the acquisition of confidence in one's self will be useful to many readers and quite appropriate here. "Cheeky" persons sometimes stammer and stutter, but many others do so from a lack of proper confidence. The following we copy from the Phrenological Journal of this city, whose editor is noted for his clear views on the subjects he treats, and his able manner of presenting them. He says :

There is nothing which makes a young man appear more awkward than lack of confidence. There is nothing which gives ease and weight of character among strangers equal to an easy confidence in a proper use of one's powers. A modest young man who has lived with his parents on a farm in the country may have a sound judgment, may have read science, history, and literature, and be well versed as to what the world has done, and who, in private conversation with intimate friends could make a good appearance and command the highest respect ; but if he should be unaccustomed to society he will not know how to act or what to do with himself—will feel raw and ignorant, and of course will act uncouthly. Let the same young man go into an office or any public place, where he must receive company, answer questions, give information and directions, and in a year he will return to his native place so changed in manner, so easy in address, that he becomes a wonder to all his rural acquaintances. What has wrought the change ? Has he read ? No ! not in fact so much as he had done before. Has he conversed with men of profound wisdom ? Probably not, but he has acquired an easy use of his faculties by mingling with people who are accustomed not merely to society, but to more intimate contact with mankind.

Business men mingling with business men sharpen one another in faculty and power of using what one knows. It is with such as these that the young man has been trained for a year, and has acquired the ease and self-command so noticeable in his manner. This seems easy and simple to everybody. Let us apply it now to one's manner in public assemblies.

Often when we tell young gentlemen, in examinations, that they are qualified for public speakers, they start back with astonishment and in doubt, saying they are not able either to think or speak before an audience. When we inquire if they find any trouble with their power of speech in common conversation with common friends on subjects with which they are familiar, they generally answer, "Oh, no! not the least!" Now one needs use and practice before an audience as much as he does in general society. There is a kind of embarrassment incident to rising before an audience, even though it be small, to speak, which in itself is based on false premises. Children and youth are accustomed to hear the learned minister, in the solemnities of public worship, utter thoughts that seem to them great, profound, solemn, and they get such an exalted idea of the dignity and importance of public speaking—the destinies of two worlds seeming to hang upon the fitness, grandeur, and comprehensiveness of every sentence—that when they essay to speak, the thought of these tremendous considerations broods over them like a pall and bears them down like a burden. In school, also, they read the most profound essays on abstract subjects, from the soundest writers in the world. Addison and Blair, Webster and Marshall, Watson and Wesley—models in composition—and why should not a green youth be startled at the idea of writing anything for the public or speaking before that public, either that which he has written, or meditated to be spoken. Subjects for public speaking for the young, as well as topics for what is called composition, should be something adapted to the capacity, culture, and knowledge of the writer or speaker. Suppose a man of common intelligence were called upon to write an essay, to read before an audience, on natural history, or on chemistry, or on inter-

national law, would it not be natural for persons so called upon to think of Agassiz, and Silliman, of Marshall, and Sumner, and, with the diffidence originating in common sense, shrink from the task? But ask a plain man to write something for plain men on a topic with which he is familiar, one on which he could converse intelligently, and then the only question of success is, familiarity with putting one's thoughts on paper.

We remember the school-boy who came home puzzled and alarmed in view of the requisition to write a composition to be read in school. He "would stay at home from school on that day to avoid it;" he would do almost anything, for he "did not know what to write about." We suggested to him to write a composition descriptive of a recent journey he had made, a dozen miles into the country. After a few moments' reflection his eyes brightened and he responded, "Oh, yes! I will put in about the rabbit I saw, and the dog that went chasing after him; the broken bridge, the boys in the boat, and the little ducklings that were trying the water for the first time," and thus he enumerated all the little incidents which had attracted his attention and interested him. He wrote his composition on this topic and used such language as he understood, such as expressed his views. When it was read before the school, composed of minds similar to his own, it created a profound sensation; every eye sparkled, every face was lighted with smiles. The teacher of course knew it was original, and had a just measure of the boy's capacity, and was interested. Perhaps it was the only composition in school which gave any measure of the original capacity of the writer, or his aptitude for composition. This was original, was his own thought, his own method of expressing what he knew, and it was on that account a decided success. From that day onward the boy never was puzzled about composition. He simply had to fall back on something he knew without trying to write a profound essay on some great ethical virtue, some profound topic of philosophy or morals. What can be more ridiculous than for a twelve or fifteen-years-old lad, or less, to undertake to write a composition on virtue, religion, education, or filial duty?

These are subjects for the theologian, metaphysician, for the magistrate, not for children.

The same rule holds relative to speaking in public. Young men commit extracts from great orations; they draw on Patrick Henry, John Adams, Daniel Webster, selecting the choicest, the most ornate passages, the grandest flights of oratoric power, which of course is all very well; but when the poor boy undertakes to debate in the lyceum, there is such a difference between his own talk and the oration he uttered the same day, that it sounds to him like the drumming on a tin pan, or like a penny whistle compared with a full orchestral band, and it sounds to others very much as it does to himself. Young men generally think over their subject and get a few sentences, opening paragraphs, highly wrought, grandiloquent. These they repeat, and then come down to their own native self, and it is like a sleigh running from the snow suddenly upon bare ground. It instantly becomes "hard sledding," and the boy, in embarrassment, having sense enough to know that he is making a failure, overcome with confusion, seeks his seat amid the titter of his associates—who could not themselves do any better in his place—and especially of the girls, who are not expected to try. One such experience frequently clips the wings for life of the incipient orator, who, properly taught, might stand among the best.

To such young men let us say, give up the idea of "oration;" rise to talk, not to "speak." Speaking is a bugbear. Talking in public should be the aim. Let no young man who reads this rise in his place and say, "Mr. Chairman, the subject of discussion which calls us together is one of such magnitude and import that I tremble in view of the vast responsibility imposed on those who would discuss it." Let him make no such portico to the diminutive edifice which is to succeed it, but let him say, "Mr. Chairman, the few thoughts I may offer shall be plain and direct. I know but little on the subject, and that little though perhaps equally known to all must be accepted on my part in the discussion;" or let him begin by saying in a conversational, easy manner, without loftiness of voice or gesticulation, "The reasons why this question should be decided in the affirma-

tive appear to me to be," first, second, and third, and let these points be noted, perhaps, on the back of a card. A glance at each will remind the speaker what he desires to talk about, and let him dwell upon these points in their order so long as he can talk to his satisfaction. When he has said all he thinks of on the first point, take the second and third, and if, by that time, his mind warms up so that he can say something inspired by the occasion, let him say it. If he talks two minutes well he will get a reputation, and every one will wish he would continue two minutes longer. If he talks badly two minutes, nobody will regret the shortness of his speech. He made but little pretension, he did what he started to do, he made no flourish of trumpets, and without display he entered, and without mortification he departed, and has succeeded. What he said was his own thought in his own words. The next time he is called upon, let him make his own little effort and retire; he will soon get used to himself and acquire the habit of thinking when he is on his feet, and before an audience; and finally he will become so used to thinking and speaking that he can think and speak better before a large audience than he could do alone. Use, habit, practice in public speaking, is to that department and to success in it precisely what practice is in using tools in playing the piano, or anything we do, and finally comes to be done without thinking, or automatically.

The remarks relative to the lyceum apply with equal force to religious meetings. Young persons think if they "speak in meeting" it should be with that breadth and ripeness which belong to the minister, or to some of the old and experienced members. We have heard some men, full of the love of God and man, who were ignorant even of common English, speak before a congregation with a simplicity, an unpretending plainness, but with that pathos and heartiness that was most overwhelming in its influence; whereas if the same thoughts had been uttered in rounded periods in polished language, it really would not have been half so effective. Its sincerity and earnestness were evinced by the plainness, even awkwardness of the speech. It should be remembered that it is the spirit of the speech,

not the polish or rounded beauty of it, which makes it effective. Let it be remembered that the congregation is only a multiplication of individuals, and that a congregation of a thousand persons is really no wiser than one man; and remember also that if what is uttered be true and plainly stated, it will be appreciated. If one man uttered ten facts in the multiplication table, though the simplest of the series, no matter what number of mathematicians may hear the utterance, each will recognize the truth, and if it is the highest truth the pupil can utter, he gets full credit for his effort. Never try to say something large, grand—something above yourself. Speak your own thoughts simply, plainly, and stop when you get through. Follow this up, and, like a child's walking, every effort giving strength, the use of the faculties will improve you. You have no right to be embarrassed in view of what you do if you do only that which you can do, and do it as well as you can. One other strong incentive to calmness in speaking in religious meetings should be the thought that we are doing a duty to God, not to man—that he knows whether we are responsible for one talent or for five, and whether we redeem properly our obligation—or do as well as we can. If, however, we try to feel that God is a loving father, not a tyrant, it will inspire confidence and lead us to forget fear.

We remember a sound farmer, a man of excellent judgment, but who could not say a word in public. We remember to have been in a school-district meeting with him, when a question came up for repairing and transformation of the school-house. It was a radical measure, and before the meeting was called to order he stood in the midst of the group and argued every point with earnestness and effect; but so soon as the meeting was called to order, and one of the members was put in the chair, and the rest were seated around the room, perhaps twenty in all, he could not say a word; some of the rest could discuss the subject in its length and breadth while he would sit with his face red and angry, but not a word could he utter. When the measures were passed upon and the meeting was dissolved, but not dispersed, he could stand up and quarrel on

every point with earnestness and logical fitness. Now what is the difference between talking when all the men are silent and sitting, or when they all stand in a group around the individual and there is no order in the discussion? Then the man could keep the run of his thoughts while half a dozen were interposing obstacles; he could fight every point and every person and maintain his position. The truth is, there is something in coming to order, even with a group of ten men, which throws embarrassment over the mind of a majority of unaccustomed speakers.

We think it is the memory of the solemn church or the august court which lingers in the mind of the person; whereas if he had been taught by the right kind of elocutionary instruction and practice, that speaking in public was only uttering plain thoughts in a plain manner, in short, talking, that high responsibility which acts on his mind as a bugbear relative to speaking in public would be dispelled. Therefore we say to young men, try to talk, not to make an oration, and you will learn by talking to become orators, if you are ordained by organization to be such; if not, you can, at least, be good talkers. As nothing is more ridiculous than a futile attempt at oratory, so nothing is more acceptable than a good, sensible, unpretending, straightforward, short, pithy talk, before any intelligent audience; but remember that there is no error of public speaking so unpardonable as prolixity, everlastingness. Speak short and sharp, and plain, and stop. Ten thousand times better to say less than an audience desires, than to say one sentence more. He is the popular orator who, however long he may speak, is hailed with "Go on—go on!"

Confidence, then, like skill, may be acquired by taking the proper course. "Practice makes perfect." Every school-boy ought to be taught both to read aloud, recite prose and poetry, write and read his own compositions, join a Bible class, a singing school, a debating club, and thus put himself in the way of improvement, and of "acquiring confidence."

In this connection the experience of a clergyman whose eloquence has made him famous far and wide may come in place. In speaking of extempore preaching, the Rev. New-

man Hall recently said: "When I went to college it seemed to me I should never be able to say a word in public without writing. But I soon determined that if I was going to be a preacher, and particularly if I wanted to be anything like a successful preacher, I must form the habit of extemporary address. So I went into my room, locked the door, placed the Bible before me on a mantel, opened it at random, and then on whatever passage my eye chanced to rest proceeded to deliver a discourse of ten minutes. This practice was kept up for an entire twelve months. Every day, for a whole year, ten minutes were given to that kind of speaking in my own room by myself. At first I found it very difficult to speak so long right to the point. But then if I couldn't talk on the subject I would talk about it—making good remarks and moral reflections—being careful to keep up the flow, and say something to the end of the term allotted for the exercise. At the end of the twelve months, however, I found I could not only speak with a good degree of fluency, but that I could hold myself strictly to the subject in hand. You take this course. Don't do your practising on an audience. That is outrageous. No man ought for a moment to think of inflicting himself on an assembly of people, until he has gone through a course of training, such as I have indicated, by himself. But you can learn to speak without notes if you will try. And surely if one is to be a minister of Christ he must be prepared to meet these little emergencies, and multiplied opportunities for preaching the Gospel which are constantly arising, but which will not wait for one to write out his thoughts."

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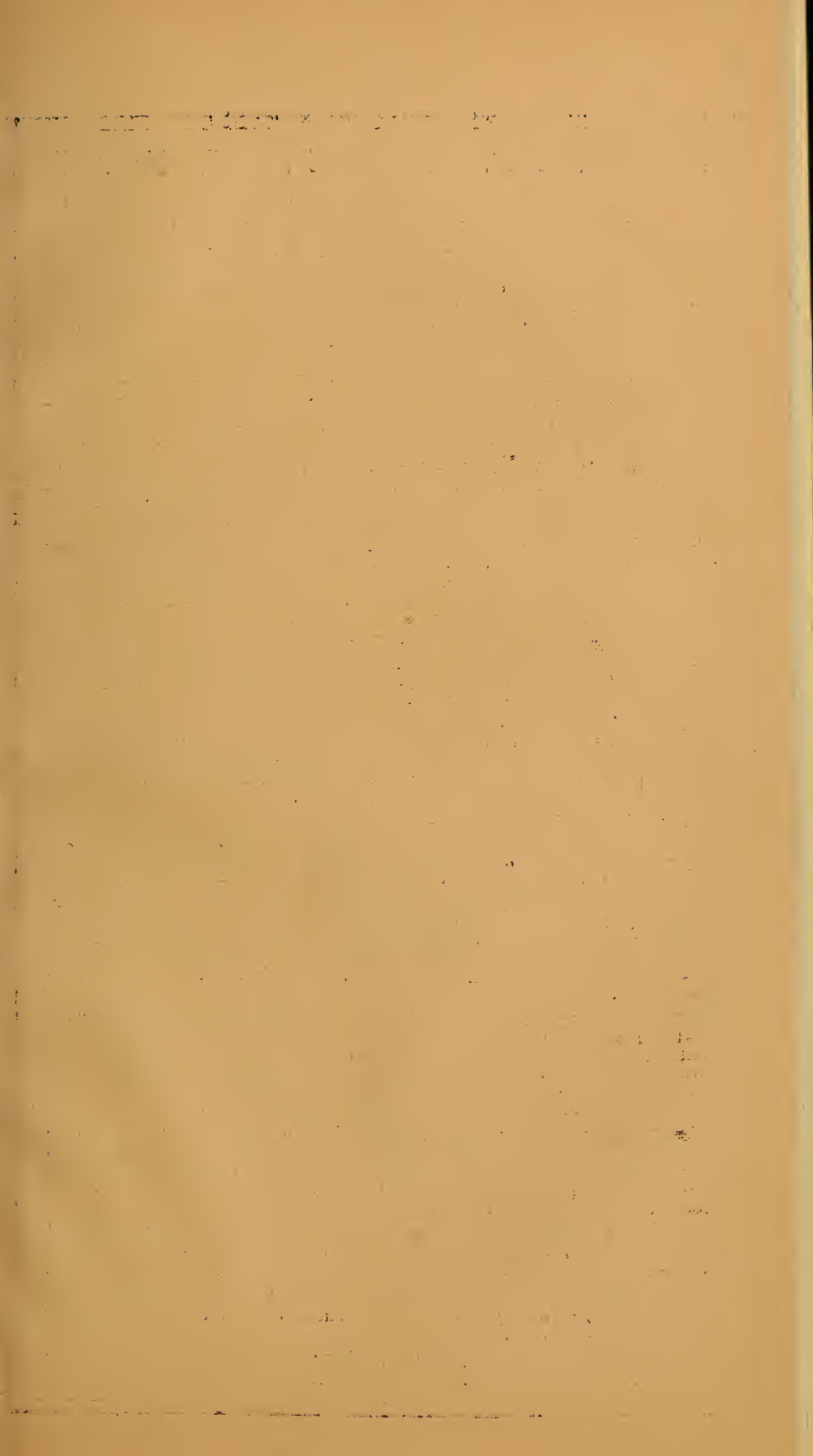
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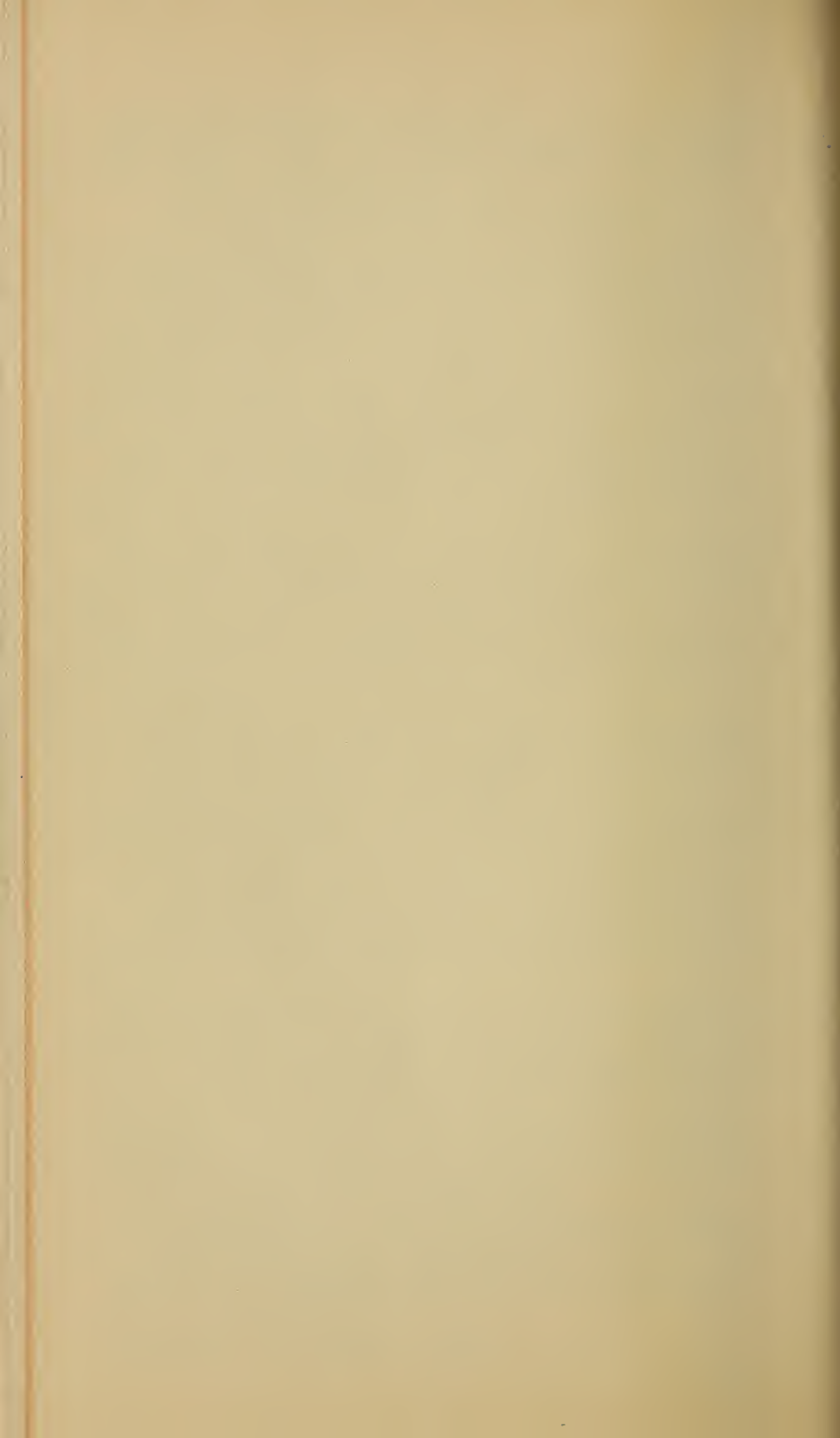
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